

RENTERS' CHECKLIST

Bulletin 583-A

To find the best place to live, you should look at several apartments or houses. The following checklist will help you compare dwellings and decide which features are most important to you. For example, if you do not own a car, you probably will not want to pay for offstreet parking.



ANSWERS (Circle)

YES	NO
YES	NO
YES	NO

ITEM (consider)

Have you considered how much and what type of space and equipment you need and want?

Have you decided on the maximum amount you can afford to spend on housing?

Have you and the person(s) with whom you live agreed on responsibility for rent and utilities?

House or Apt. 1	House or Apt. 2	House or Apt 3
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Monthly Expenses

How much is the monthly rent?

If the following are not included in your rent, enter the anticipated amount.

Water and Sewer

Electricity

Gas (natural or bottled LP)

Phone

Trash collection

Snow removal

Lawn maintenance

Access to recreational facilities

Rent increase if guests and friends live with you for an extended time

Other (specify)

TOTAL MONTHLY OPERATING EXPENSE (add)

YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
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Is your monthly expense less than 1-week's take-home pay?

Initial Expenses

If the following charges are involved, enter the amount.

Damage or security deposit

Utility service deposit

\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

House or Apt. 1		House or Apt. 2		House or Apt. 3	
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

Utility Systems

☐ Lighting and Ventilation

- Do the windows provide adequate natural illumination?
- Does the home have good artificial lighting, especially in the kitchen and bathroom?
- Does the window arrangement provide good cross ventilation?
- Do the windows open and close smoothly?
- Does the air conditioner operate properly?
- Are there vented exhaust fans in the bathroom and over the kitchen range?

☐ Heating and Insulation

- Is the supply of heat adequate?
- Is there a thermostat in your unit so you can control heat without asking the caretaker?
- Is the thermostat in a satisfactory location?
- Is heat distribution adequate? Look for hot air registers or heating elements along the base of exterior walls and under windows.
- If you have a forced-air heating system, are cold air returns provided in all the rooms? Less expensive systems without cold air returns have 2- to 3-inch gaps beneath interior doors. These may cause drafty conditions.

☐ Plumbing

- Are your plumbing fixtures attractive and easy to clean?
- Do the toilet, dishwasher, and other plumbing facilities operate quietly?
- Do you have an adequate supply of hot water? You may find the supply inadequate if it is shared with other apartments.

☐ Electrical

- Does the dwelling have at least 50 amp service or 100 amp service if you have a washer, dryer, air conditioner, garbage disposal, dishwasher or electric range?
- Are adequate electrical outlets provided, and do they operate properly? At least one per wall should be located in each room and over the kitchen counter. They should be no more than 12 feet apart.
- Are there enough switches to light your way through the dwelling?

House or Apt. 1		House or Apt. 2		House or Apt. 3	
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
YES	NO*	YES	NO*	YES	NO*

Interiors

- ☐ Does the floor plan provide space for activities and privacy?
- ☐ Will the areas in which your activities take place be free from family traffic?
- ☐ Does the dwelling have adequate storage space? This should include a closet close to the front door, at least 4 feet of rod space for each family member's clothes, linen storage, kitchen storage for equipment and food, and seasonal storage?
- ☐ Can you securely lock these additional storage facilities?
- ☐ Is the interior design attractive?
- ☐ Do the furnishings, materials, and equipment promote easy maintenance? For example, shag carpet is difficult to keep clean in the kitchen and around exterior doors.
- ☐ **Furniture** (For furnished apartments)
 - Is there quality construction throughout the furnishings?
 - Are all joints firm, closely fitted, reinforced, and strongly glued?
 - Is the wood finish neat, smooth, and attractive?
 - Do drawers operate smoothly?
 - Is upholstered furniture comfortable?
- ☐ **Appliances**
 - Are the kitchen appliances the type, size, and quality needed?
 - Are the appliances clean, and do they operate properly?
- ☐ **Other**
 - Is acoustical insulation used between apartments?
 - Are laundry facilities available? If so, where are they located, do they operate properly, and what is the cost?
 - Does the house or apartment have fire extinguishers?
 - When were the extinguishers last checked?
 - Is it convenient to carry in groceries and carry out garbage?
 - For the money you will spend, will the dwelling permit the type of life you and your family want?

NOTE: If any of the starred (*) questions were answered "NO", do not sign a rental agreement until you carefully re-evaluate the situation.

*This bulletin was written by **William J. Angell**, Extension Housing Specialist, University of Minnesota, and has been revised for use in Ohio by **Golden Jackson**, Extension Specialist, Housing, The Ohio State University.*

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